

## **WCRC Minutes**

**March 5, 2003**

**Intro of members:** JB Alexander, Creede; Jim Herron, Colorado Div. Minerals and Geology; Leigh Ann Vradenburg, Watershed Coordinator; Zeke Ward, Chairman WCRC; Jim Matush, Creede; Laura Coppock, USFWS; Bob Kirkham, Consultant; Jim Mietz, SLV RC&D; Les Dobson, USDA/FS; Don Gant, Creede/Trout Unlimited.

**Approval of minutes:** Motion to approve the February minutes was made by JB Alexander; second made by Don Gant. Motion carried.

**Additions/corrections to the agenda:** A discussion of the site reclamation work scheduled for this year was included as Old Business C. A new work order was added to Old Business A. Changes to the Sampling and Analysis Plan was added as New Business C. Research of domestic wells was added under New Business D.

**In-Kind:** Forms were provided in hard copy for volunteers to track time and other expenses. Leigh Ann encouraged monthly submission of these forms so that records could be kept current.

### **Coordinator's Report:**

Leigh Ann informed the committee that she attended a function organized by the El Pomar Foundation, a group that gives awards to worthy non-profit groups throughout Colorado. Leigh Ann presented a new poster that she created for the committee. A representative for El Pomar will be nominating the committee for an award in environmental work. If chosen, the committee will receive \$15,000. Selected finalists will receive \$5,000. This money will not require a match and designated purpose. Notifications to finalists will be sent in mid-August.

The committee has now received a final copy of the Holy Moses report done by Eric Twitty, and that grant is closed out. A draft of Eric's Alpha Corsair report is currently being reviewed by the State Historic Fund. Eric is interested in pursuing an "archaeological assessment grant" to conduct a survey of the historic settlement sites. According to Eric, these grants do not require a match and are non-competitive. They do, however, have a maximum level, and in order to complete inventories for all of the settlement sites, we will need to get two or three grants. Eric is continuing to look into these grants and the necessary application procedures.

Leigh Ann sent the application for the National Forest Foundation grant discussed in the last meeting. The committee will be notified by April 4 if they are selected to receive the grant.

Leigh Ann purchased a new Dell desktop, which should be received in the next week. It is anticipated that this computer will meet the committee's needs for the next few years in terms of speed and storage. She also bought a hard drive backup as recommended by JB Alexander. The total cost was \$1830.

The Voluntary Clean-Up Plan for the Airport Corner property was approved by CDPHE, and Prospective Purchaser Agreements are still underway for John Parker and the Mineral County Fairground Association.

### **Old business:**

Underground update/ work order: Jim Herron reported that Ken Wyley and Jerry Wintz have done a tremendous amount of work in a short period of time. All work that was approved at the February meeting has been completed, and Ken and Jerry have contributed many more volunteer hours mucking out several key areas. Work is progressing well and the committee should be in good shape to collect water samples this spring. On Tuesday, March 4, Jim Herron, Jeff Graves, Bob Kirkham, Al Amundson (CDMG), and Leigh Ann went into the mine to inspect the new construction and to get a flow at the Bachelor Shaft. New ladders and landings improved access as the Commodore Shaft, Javelin, and Daylight Corner. The crew accessed the Nelson Tunnel near the Corkscrew Raise and determined that there was not a substantial flow of water that could be segregated from the contaminated water flow down through the Wooster/Nelson.

The next work will include enhancing/ adding landings; stabilizing the stope by the hospital; stabilizing or removing the debris held up by a broken ladder; and working on the rail to allow motor access to more areas of the mine. Zeke presented a work order from Ken and Jerry for approximately \$5,000 for this work. Motion to approve Ken and Jerry to rehabilitate the track and do the other safety work for \$5,000 made by JB Alexander; second made by Jim Herron. Motion carried.

USACE well and core data: Leigh Ann handed out spreadsheets containing 1) the water quality data from the new USACE wells, and 2) the sediment samples from the Emperious Tailings Pile core. As anticipated, the well (MW16) placed at the toe of the pile north of the contaminated wells (MW8-MW11) was likewise contaminated. Three wells were used to evaluate the geophysical study conclusions: MW17 in a Natural Potential anomaly, MW18 in an Electromagnetic anomaly, and MW19 in an area expected to be clean water as determined by both methods. The anomalies indicate sites where there should be heavily contaminated groundwater; however, the results of the water analyses indicate that this was not the case. MW17 was the cleanest of the new wells (though still contaminated by normal standards). Metals from MW18 were lower than, but comparable to MW8-MW11. Metals from the "clean" well (MW19) fell mid-range in concentrations considering all wells. It was concluded that the geophysical studies did not give a clear picture of the contaminated groundwater plume.

The fifth new well, MW20, will be used to conduct slug or flux tests this April in conjunction with a full well sampling event. It is anticipated that this will give the committee an indication of the rate of groundwater movement.

The data from the core indicated that the material in the pile and below the pile was heavily contaminated. These data did not lend much to solving the mysterious history of the pile, but it is now known that the pile does not sit on uncontaminated ground. Jim Mietz asked if there were

any other mine reclamation areas that had dealt with similar problems. Jim Herron suggested looking into the Bureau of Reclamation work at Baker's Park. Bob Kirkham indicated that the Department of Energy has done work with uranium tailings piles. Zeke Ward suggested that we look into work done at the Bonanza site. Laura Coppock will send Leigh Ann any contacts she has regarding this type of work. Leigh Ann will follow up on this by contacting the suggested entities to see if there are any comparable situations. A final report from the USACE should be available this spring.

Reclamation plans: Jim Herron asked if the committee wanted to handle advertising and letting bids for the upcoming reclamation work. CDMG could do the bidding, but complications with transferring 319 and Forest Service money would be greater. Zeke said that the committee would handle the bidding, with the guidance of CDMG. Herron said the CDMG could draft up the bid documents for the committee. Les Dobson said that he would continue to work on the Challenge Cost Share Agreement. Leigh Ann asked how the city and county could get involved and donate equipment or time. Herron said that the committee would have to take the bid documents to the city and county ahead of time to see what they would contribute.

### **New business**

Re-veg plans: Leigh Ann and JB recounted the results of their re-veg meeting with Steve Russell. The primary objective for this year will be to monitor the success of tree and grass plantings from previous years. Steve will be working with Marvin Reynolds to acquire a few trees and shrubs to plant this spring. The re-veg committee is also planning to do several willow clump plantings. This involves digging up a small willow clump, including roots and associated soil, and replanting it in another hole. Steve Russell has had good success with this method, even during last year's drought. Leigh Ann will approach the city about equipment.

Leigh Ann asked what should be done about the lack of a full summary report for the re-veg work. Zeke said that Leigh Ann should work with Marvin and Steve to get all of the past information. Maps should also be generated so that the success of plantings can be easily monitored. Leigh Ann, JB, and Jim Matush will work on mapping the plantings and acquiring GPS locations.

Solomon test pit: The committee will not pursue an extensive sediment sampling regime at the Solomon park area at this time.

SAP changes: Leigh Ann has been working on including the SAP changes specific to this year's reclamation work. She is also preparing an electronic copy of the entire document. She will send out the revised SAP to the Technical Advisory Committee as soon as possible. Motion for the TAC to recommend changes to the SAP to be approved at the April meeting made by JB Alexander; second made by Laura Coppock. Motion carried.

Well research: As discussed in the TAC meeting, the committee would like to pursue information on deep private wells in the Windy Gulch drainage. Don Gant will look into well information about the Bach residence. Bob Kirkham would like to follow up on the other wells for the committee. Motion for Bob to do no more than 10 hours at \$50/hr researching these domestic wells made by

JB Alexander; second made by Don Gant. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be April 2, 2003.

Meeting Adjourned 4:15 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Leigh Ann Vradenburg